

## ABSTRACT

[0090] A set of access control labels is assigned to each of a number of users of a caching infrastructure in a network. The labels are used in specifying access control lists for content of the users. Requests for the content are referred to selected information object repositories of the caching infrastructure without regard as to whether the content is actually stored at the information object repositories; and access to the content is controlled according to access lists developed according to the access control labels. Access to the content may be controlled by comparing information included in uniform resource locators (URLs) to the access control lists. Such information may be one or more digital signatures, for example, which identify one or more of: the source of the requests, and an owner of an information object being requested. The access control lists are preferably maintained corresponding to the access control labels, which may be hierarchical in nature. Each of the information object repositories of the caching infrastructure may store a copy of each of the access control lists. Access to content is denied if a request therefor is not authorized, otherwise, the content is returned to a requestor thereof.